

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are all the claims pending in the application.

Dealing with preliminary matters first, Applicants submit one (1) sheet of replacement drawings where Figures 7 and 8 have been labeled “PRIOR ART”, as requested by the Examiner.

Whereas in the previous Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the claims were allowable, in the present Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nolle (U.S. Patent No. 6,538,203) in view of Shinchi (U.S. Patent No. 6,059,617). On the other hand, the Examiner maintains that claim 4 contains allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Briefly, the invention is directed to a method of connecting a terminal fitting 42 to an electric wire 17 by means of a conductive connecting member 10. This involves inserting the electric wire into the insertion hole of the connecting member 10 and compressing the connecting member radially inwardly so as to caulk an inserted portion of the electric wire uniformly over the entire periphery of the wire. Thereafter the connecting member is welded to the terminal fitting by applying ultrasonic waves.

In the rejection, the Examiner contends that the primary reference, Nolle, teaches all of the features recited in claim 1, with the exception of the requirement that the welding be ultrasonic.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
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Applicants respectfully submit that Nolle does not teach or suggest the feature of “compressing the connecting member radially inwardly so as to caulk an inserted portion of the electric wire uniformly over a whole periphery thereof.”, as recited in claim 1.

More specifically, Nolle discloses that “the support sleeve 13 can thus first be applied and crimped or shrunk on externally in the longitudinal direction to the end of the striped aluminum cable to be connected.” Applicants submit that a person of ordinary skill in the art would interpret this language to mean that the sleeve is crimped in the extension direction of the sleeve 13, i.e., in the compression direction identified on attached Figure 2 of Nolle. Thus, Nolle does not teach or suggest the important feature of the invention of compressing the connecting member radially inwardly, as recited in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue at the earliest convenience. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian W. Hannon
Registration No. 32,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

One (1) sheet drawings where Figures 7 and 8 are labeled “PRIOR ART”.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet